



# The Jewish Community of Hamelin Newsletter

April–May 2015 • Nisan–Iyar–Sivan 5775

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**Dear members, friends and supporters,**

Many readers have noticed that we are trying out a new newsletter format. The newsletter will appear bi-monthly, the program of events monthly. Let us know what you think. We appreciate your thoughts and would like to hear from you.



Our Purim festivities were a while ago, but we hope our readers will notice how much the festival was enjoyed by young and old. We thank the team of helpers who decorated, baked sweet and delicious Hamantaschen and set up colorful, inviting tables. Everything was lovely!

Purim reminds us to guard against religious extremism. It also teaches us to be pro-active in our response. Fear is never a good response. As Viktor E. Frankl wrote, “Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.”

Our annual membership meeting included board elections this year. The complete board was re-elected. Rachel Dohme was re-elected in her post as president, an office she has held consecutively since 1997. Vice president is Polina Pelts, Treasurer is Olga Gerr. The board is strengthened with Peter Wendt and Faina Pelts.

Pesach stood in the center of April's congregational life as it did the world over. We had a more-than-full house as Rabbi Sascha Lyskovoy led Seder. Please enjoy the photos which speak their own language. We enjoyed participating in the reading of the Haggadah in Hebrew, Russian and German, and the amazing meal and watching the children hunt for the Afikomen. We wish to thank our kitchen team for all their extra work and preparation. Everything was festive and delicious. One could taste the love.



In our Jewish lives happy holidays are intermingled with days of sadness and remembrance. So it was that Wladimir Pesok led a short but moving Yom HaShoah service on April 16th. We will never forget those who came before us and we will continue to work to re-establish Judaism here and now.

It is always good to welcome our rabbi Irit Shillor for her monthly visit. We enjoyed services with her, thought-provoking sermons and Torah study sessions. Rabbi Shillor not only enriches our congregation but lectures as our representative to the Society of Christians and Jews and the House of World Religions. In April the topics were “Judaism’s Beginnings” and “Religion and Violence”; both lectures led to fascinating discussions.



## Jewish May

This year is the 70th anniversary of Victory Day. The congregation will celebrate and honor those who fought against Fascism. Rabbi Sascha Lyskovoy will emphasize the meaning of this day in his sermons on the weekend of May 8th and 9th. We are pleased that Rabbi Alexander Lyskovoy will join us for his fifth visit in May. For our many Russian-speaking members, having Rabbi Lyskovoy offers them an opportunity to enjoy services, lectures and Torah study in their mother tongue. For German-speakers translations will be offered. It is exciting to see many families attending his services and engaging on a religious level with him. On May 10th you are invited to a memorial concert in our sanctuary.

In the afternoon of May 10th, we will have a post Lag B’Omer picnic. As always, we will meet in the garden of the Lutheran church. Our Lutheran neighbors extend this invitation to us every year. Kosher hot dogs will be hot off the grill, and we hope for a varied buffet of vegetarian dishes.

The inter-religious women’s group will meet for the second time this year on May 12th. We will welcome Jewish, Muslim and Christian women to an afternoon meeting in our synagogue. Ioulia Berhowski will give a presentation about religious garments, the year’s topic.

May 22nd and 23rd will also offer a weekend of services, learning and music as Peter Wendt leads Friday night services with our synagogue choir “Shalom” and Saturday morning services and Torah study, emphasizing Shavuot. Over luscious slices of cheesecake, we will discuss “What does the Torah say to me?”

## Our Youth Group

Patrizia and Mascha took our youth group on an outing in April. The youth were excited and happy to spend a day at “Noah’s Ark,” the Hannover Zoo. Patrizia and Mascha thank the parents who helped out. It’s clear by the shining, smiling faces that everyone had fun!

What will the next activity be?



## Patrizia in Israel

You have often read about one of our teens, Patrizia Berhowski. She is the daughter of FSU Jews who immigrated to Germany in the 1980s. Patrizia has gone through the camping program and is now herself a youth leader at a national level and in our congregation. Her bright and happy presence lights up every room she enters! This summer Patrizia will graduate from high school. She dreams of spending a year in Israel with the WUPJ Shnat Program. This program will be formative for Patrizia, exposing her to Israeli society in its religious plurality, Zionism,



culture, military life, and contact with young Israelis and young Palestinians. She will offer lectures upon her return. Of course, a year in Israel is not without cost and Patrizia must still raise \$10,000. If you can help, please contact Rachel Dohme, [racheldohme@jghreform.org](mailto:racheldohme@jghreform.org). Young people are our future and any help, large or small, will be appreciated by Patrizia.

## Our Internet Presence

Those of you reading this newsletter in English are reading the internet version. The newsletter is also available in print form in [German](#) and [Russian](#) for members and supporters here in Germany. Many hours and many hands go into producing this monthly informational newsletter. Keeping us online is no small expense for our small community of 90 percent Russian Jewish immigrants. We recognize the importance of this media tool in connecting and informing others of our congregational efforts and developments. And this newsletter has been the most efficient and successful outreach tool in our attempts to network internationally. Many new relationships have been established and built as a result of this newsletter and we are grateful to all involved. If you would care to help us stay online, please contact Rachel Dohme at [racheldohme@jghreform.org](mailto:racheldohme@jghreform.org). We appreciate any and all support.

## Refu'ah shlemah

We pray for the complete recovery of all who are ill and everyone who is going through difficult times. We will recite Misheberach for them during services. Please join us.



## Donations — Tzedakah

We thank all those who donated to either the congregation or the synagogue foundation: We wish to thank the Bielefeld Lion's Club, Mr. Hans Weltner, Mrs. Rachel Dohme and Mrs. Ute Gibas. May you all be blessed for your generosity.

## Etz Chayim — Tree of Life

It's spring! It's time to remember that special person or event with a new leaf on our Tree of Life. The tree offers our members, friends and supporters the opportunity for two mitzvot (good deeds) at once. One can commemorate special occasions, such as births, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, weddings, Yahrzeits and special honors, and also support the maintenance of our synagogue.

## Thank you — Todah Rabah

We thank everyone who helped in making our holiday and cultural events very special. Our thanks go to everyone who plans and organizes activities in our community.

## Condolences

We extend our condolences to the family of Ryssis Kotchergina, of blessed memory. Mrs. Kotchergina's funeral was held on April 30th. The funeral service was led by Wladimir Pesok.

## Yahrzeit in April and May

Tetyana Khodos	April 4, 1998 / 8. Nisan 5758
Anna Pototcaia	April 11, 2000 / 6. Nisan 5760
Eugenia Borishanskai	April 26, 2004 / 5. Iyar 5764
Boris Frid	April 28, 2011 / 24. Nissan 5771
Juriy Lebedinskiy	April 4, 2012 / 10. Nissan 5772
Alex Voronov	April 4, 2012 / 18. Nissan 5772
Betja Kholmer	May 8, 1997 / 1 Iyar 5757
Evgenia Benderskaja	May 24, 2001 / 2 Sivan 5761
Vladimir Rubanov	May 14, 2002 / 3 Sivan 5762
Sofia Kaspler	May 13, 2008 / 8 Iyar 5768
Felix Gurevich	May 1, 2014 / 1 Iyar 5774



May the memory of our loved ones be for a blessing. Please join family members during Sabbath services as we recite Kaddish. Yahrzeit candles are available in the office.

## The Congregation Board

## Program for May 2015 • Iyar–Sivan 5775

**Office hours: Monday, Wednesday & Friday: 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.; Tuesday & Thursday: 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.**

Wednesday, May 6      10:00 a.m.      Monthly board meeting

### **Rabbi Sascha Lyskovoy's visit**

Friday, May 8	3:00 p.m.	Open education class in Russian
	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services with Rabbi Sascha
Saturday, May 9	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services with Rabbi Sascha
Sunday, May 10	1:00 p.m.	Concert in honor of the 70 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of Victory Day with "Duo Melodie"
	3:00 p.m.	Lag B'Omer picnic in the garden of the Lutheran church. Kosher hot dogs provided, please bring something vegetarian to share.
Tuesday, May 12	5:00 p.m.	Inter-religious Women's Group, Session II: "Religious garments" with Ioulia Berhowski
Saturday, May 16	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services with Heidi Braun
Thursday, May 21	11:00 a.m.	Questions and answers about changes in the welfare system with Margarita Souslovic, State Board of Jewish Congregations in Lower Saxony
Friday, May 23	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services with Peter Wendt and Synagogue choir "Shalom"
Saturday, May 24	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services with Peter Wendt. Study session for Shavuot: "What does the Torah say to me?" Kiddush with cheesecake and dairy delights
Tuesday, May 26	3:00 p.m.	Senior Café with Polina Pelts. Program: Ukrainian and Russian melodies"
Wednesday, May 27	5:30 p.m.	"Medical resources in Germany" with Ioulia Berhowski

### **Outside the congregation**

Tuesday, May 5      7:00 p.m.      Book presentation in cooperation with the Society of Christians and Jews and the Library Society with Bernd Bruns, Avi Primor's newest book, *Sweet and Honorable*

## [Newsletter Archives](#)

### **Jewish Community of Hamelin**

Member of the Union of Progressive Jews in Germany, the World Union of Progressive Judaism, and the Central Council of Jews of Germany

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